

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8188

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EO 11652: N/A  
TAGS: CGEN, GE  
SUBJECT: GDR TRAVEL FEES FOR AUTOMOBILES

REF: (A) STATE 117950, (B) BERLIN 3409, (C) BERLIN 4213

1. EMBASSY HAS NOW RECEIVED A REPLY TO ITS NOTE NO. 123  
OF MAY 17, 1978 ON GDR CHARGES APPLICABLE TO THE OPERATION  
OF PRIVATE MOTOR VEHICLES BY VISITORS TO THE GDR, AND THE  
USE OF TEMPORARY CUSTOMS PLATES.

2. AN INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF THE MFA NOTE FOLLOWS.  
BEGIN TEXT:

THE CONSULAR DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
PRESENTS ITS COMPLIMENTS TO THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED  
STATES OF AMERICA IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AND HAS  
THE HONOR, WITH REFERENCE TO THE EMBASSY'S NOTE NO. 123  
OF MAY 17, 1978, TO COMMUNICATE THE FOLLOWING:

NO CUSTOMS LICENCE PLATES ARE PROVIDED OR REQUIRED FOR MO-  
TOR VEHICLES OF PRIVATE TRAVELERS FROM THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA IN OR THROUGH THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC IF  
THE VEHICLE IS PROVIDED WITH A LICENCE PLATE OF A COM-  
PETENT AUTHORITY.

IF SUCH LICENCE PLATE IS A CUSTOMS PLATE OF ANOTHER  
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STATE, CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBL-  
IC MAY REQUIRE AN INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATE REGISTRY, OR  
AN APPROPRIATE CUSTOMS LICENCE PLATE CERTIFICATE.

PRIVATE PERSONS TRAVELING BY MOTOR VEHICLE IN OR THROUGH  
THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC HAVE TO PAY ROAD TOLLS AS  
PROVIDED BY THE DECREE OF SEPTEMBER 6, 1951, PUBLISHED

UNDER NUMBER 115/1951 IN THE LAW GEZETTE OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC.  
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THAT DECREE, THE FOLLOWING TARIFF OF FEES APPLIES:

FOR TRAVEL BY AUTOMOBILE (PASSENGER CAR) ON THE TERRITORY OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC UP TO 200 KM - 5.00 MARKS, OVER 200 KM UP TO 300 KM - 15.00 MARKS, OVER 300 UP TO 400 KM - 20.00 MARKS, OVER 400 KM - 25.00 MARKS.  
THE SAME FEES HAVE TO BE PAID FOR RETURN TRAVEL.

FOR MOTOR VEHICLES, OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS TRAVELING PRIVATELY, WITH LICENCE PLATES ISSUED BY AN APPROPRIATE AND COMPETENT U.S. AUTHORITY, A LIABILITY INSURANCE HAS TO BE EFFECTED AT THE BORDER CROSSING POINT OF THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC. THE INSURANCE IS GRADUATED AS FOLLOWS:

FOR A STAY OF 7 DAYS IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC - 12.00 MARKS; FOR A STAY OF 14 DAYS - 20.00 MARKS; FOR A STAY OF ONE MONTH - 30.00 MARKS; FOR ANY FURTHER MONTH OR FRACTION THEREOF - 15.00 MARKS; FOR A STAY OF ONE YEAR IN THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC - 195.00 MARKS.  
(COMPLIMENTARY CLOSE). END TEXT.

3. THE INFORMATION IN THE NOTE CONCERNING VEHICLES  
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WITH "CUSTOMS PLATE(S) OF ANOTHER STATE", AND LIABILITY INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR VEHICLES WITH LICENCE TAGS ISSUED BY AN "APPROPRIATE AND COMPETENT U.S. AUTHORITY" IS NOT CLEAR. WE ATTEMPTED TO OBTAIN A CLARIFICATION BY TELEPHONE FROM THE MFA, BUT WERE TOLD THAT THE INFORMATION WAS PROVIDED BY GDR CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES AND THAT THE MFA COULD NOT COMMENT ON THE INFORMATION. THE MFA SUGGESTED THAT FURTHER QUESTIONS BE POSED IN A NEW DIPLOMATIC NOTE.

4. WE WILL SEND A NEW NOTE ON THE SUBJECT ASKING SPECIFICALLY THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH REQUIRE THAT U.S. CITIZENS BUY GDR CUSTOMS PLATES, AND WHAT COSTS ARE IMPOSED. WE WILL ALSO ASK IF U.S. CITIZENS IN POSSESSION OF A VALID INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE CARD (GREEN CARD) MUST ALSO PURCHASE LOCAL LIABILITY INSURANCE WHEN ENTERING THE GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC. THE DEPARTMENT WILL BE PROMPTLY INFORMED WHEN A REPLY IS RECEIVED.

5. IN MAKING THE INFORMATION IN THE NOTE AVAILABLE TO U.S. TRAVELERS, THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO POINT OUT THAT THESE FEES ARE IN ADDITION TO VISA FEES AND MANDATORY CURRENCY EXCHANGE. SINCE THE TRAVELLER ENTERING THE GDR BY PRIVATE

AUTOMOBILE WOULD BE PAYING ALL THE FEES AT THE SAME TIME,  
CONFUSION CONCERNING THE SEVERAL BASES OF THE CHARGES  
WOULD BE UNDERSTANDABLE. POLANSKY

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